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• The Kohler Report — I'm an adult, so let me buy liquor with my chips. PAGE 12
• Dry patches — Metro maps the most underserved areas in Toronto. PAGE 7

Three-parent children 'on the way' to Canada

Science. Procedure with implications for children's identity will inevitably come here, says U of T bioethicist

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
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A Toronto bioethicist says Canadians should get ready for so-called three-parent babies.

"It's coming," said Kerry Bowman of the University of Toronto's Joint Centre for Bioethics. "These types of genetic interventions are on the way."

The implications — including issues around identity and manufacturing our children — remain unknown.

And Bowman said it's only a matter of time before this is being debated in Canada.

This week, U.K. lawmakers voted to let doctors use the DNA from three people — biological parents, plus the healthy mitochondria of a female donor — to create a baby without mitochondrial disease. If approved by a second vote, the U.K. will be the first country to allow a three-parent baby.

Asked if Canada should approve the procedure, Bowman said, "I think we should, but I need to qualify: We need to proceed with great caution."

"Mitochondrial disease causes awful suffering in babies and children. They often die young and they lead short and painful and unwell lives," Bowman said. "To have three-parent IVF (in vitro fertilization) as a way of preventing suffering in babies and children — who could be against something like that?"

But longer-term impacts remain unknown. Proponents of the procedure argue the new law is being blown out of proportion, and the amount of DNA passed on to the baby from the third donor, at 0.1 per cent, is miniscule.

"We're not playing God here," U.K. Prime Minister David Cameron has said.

Bowman disagreed. Even at "a minuscule amount of the DNA, the genetic material is passed down," he said, and that has implications for the identity of the child, and the generations that follow.

Research into the origins of humanity uses mitochondrial DNA to trace where we came from, Bowman noted, "so from a point of view of human identity, we don't really know what it means."

It's also unclear how Canadians feel about the issue, he said, adding that the debate "shouldn't be left to academics and politicians alone."

For now, Bowman predicted the rest of the world will "quite happily sit back and see how this works out for the Brits."

But at some point, our turn will come, he said.

"It's part of the human condition to prevent suffering and to improve our world. This is part of what humans do."

Quoted

"We're now genetically intervening on unborn human life, and this is a big step." Bioethicist Kerry Bowman

TARGET MISSES THE MARK

A shopper browses near-empty shelves at Target Canada's Stockyards location on St. Clair Avenue on Thursday. Bargain hunters looking for big savings were disappointed during the first day of Target's much-hyped liquidation sale. Story, page 10. ANDREW FRANCIS WALLACE/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Commuter woes

Frozen switches stop the GO train

GO riders on Lakeshore East were late to work Thursday as frozen track switches again delayed trains, leaving commuters standing and shivering on platforms and tracks.

The cold weather interfered with service only three days after a Monday storm crippled GO service on the Lakeshore West and Milton lines with delays and cancellations that cascaded east in some cases.

The problem Thursday — frozen switches at the Durham junction west of Pickering — meant that crews had to manually signal train movements, said Metrolinx spokeswoman Anne Marie Aikins.

When the moving parts in the switches freeze, they can break or stick. That means the signal that would allow the train to move down the track isn't triggered. In some cases switches can be manually released and a crew member can signal for the train to move ahead.

Four rush-hour trains were delayed up to about 30 minutes each and two express trains were modified to make all stops. One other train was cancelled. Each train carries about 1,800 riders.

Plummeting temperatures into Thursday morning followed a slight thaw earlier Wednesday meaning there was condensation and ice that built up on the metal track switches, said Aikins, who said it's never a bad idea when travelling in winter to pack a snack and some water.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Eagle gets a second chance at life

A female bald eagle is recovering at the Toronto Wildlife Centre after being found stuck in a leg-hold trap in Simcoe County earlier this week. Bald eagles are considered an at-risk species in Ontario, and the bird is only the fourth one ever cared for at the centre. The eagle has an injured talon, and staff at the centre are hoping it heals well. "An eagle needs those feet to hunt or even to eat," said Nathalie Karvonen, the centre's director. CONTRIBUTED

Transit-cost questions roll back to city hall

Council. Price tag associated with Scarborough subway, cancelled LRT to be discussed next week

Questions over the real cost of the Scarborough subway and what the city owes for cancelling an LRT alternative will resurface at Mayor John Tory's second city council meeting next week.

Sixteen months after councillors under former mayor Rob Ford voted to change direction and endorse a three-stop subway plan over the fully funded seven-stop light-rapid-transit line, staff will face questions about both the justification for the subway and the costs.

Coun. Josh Matlow, a staunch supporter of the LRT and one of 20 councillors who voted against the subway switch, has filed five administrative inquires to be heard next week.

Administrative inquiries, though not often used, are a way for councillors to clarify or request information from staff about issues that were previously discussed. Council meets starting Feb. 10.

Included are questions for city manager Joe Pennachetti, who recently told Torstar News Service the cost of cancelling the already agreed-upon LRT — what could be $75 million and has been cited as high as $85 million — is already included, but hidden, in the capital budget. Pennachetti said the city has been negotiating costs with Metrolinx, but has refused to say what cost they settled on.

Asked again about the costs this week, Pennachetti said the city has always budgeted for the $85 million number within the total $3.56 billion project cost — a practice he says continued this year.

The city manager pointed to an October 2013 report that claims the city has already subtracted the $85 million owed to the province from its funding calculations for the subway, which include provincial funding of $1.99 billion. But the same report says the $1.99 billion number was adjusted for inflation from the province's $1.48 billion commitment. When asked about the discrepancy, Pennachetti insisted the $1.99 billion figure does reflect the money owed to the province.

Matlow's other inquires ask for clarification on one of the key numbers used to justify council's decision for the switch — the number of people who will actually ride the subway. Matlow questioned why Agincourt GO station, utilized in Tory's plans for SmartTrack and parallel to the proposed Sheppard East subway station, was left out of the current subway study. He asked whether that potential impact on riders will be taken into consideration. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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HUDSON'S BAY

‘Worst movers ever’ allegedly fail to deliver, respond to calls

Business. Customer believes Toronto moving company ‘stole’ his furniture

LUKE SIMCOE
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Every time Mark Davids sits down at his desk — which doubles as his kitchen table — he’s reminded of the “stupid mistake” he made last fall.

Davids has been locked in a struggle with iMove Canada since October when he says the Toronto moving company “stole” most of his furniture.

He’s not alone.

Review websites like Yelp are littered with complaints about iMove, alleging everything from drunk drivers to bedbugs.

The Better Business Bureau, which grades company as an “F,” has fielded 21 complaints about the company in the last three years. Several of those are from people who say their belongings didn’t make it from Point A to Point B.

Mark Davids, 25, is considering legal action against a moving company in Toronto. CONTRIBUTED

One Yelp reviewer referred to iMove as the “worst movers ever.”

Contacted by Metro, iMove president Andrew Ludzeneks disputed claims his company was a “fly-by-night” operation.

“There have been some delays with delivery,” he said. “But we’ve never had freight go missing.”

In Davids’ case, he found iMove as he was finishing his master’s at York University and preparing to move back to Lethbridge, Alta. The company promised to ship his furniture across the country for $700.

Davids said iMove staff seemed “helpful and on the ball” on the phone, but the problems began after he scheduled a pickup.

First, he claims the moving truck showed up two days after it was expected. The movers were also less than professional, he said, dragging furniture across the floor and callously tossing it into the vehicle.

“That should have been a red flag,” he said. “But I was so worried about getting everything sorted out before I left that I didn’t notice.”

Quoted

“I want to stop other people from making the same stupid mistake I did.” Mark Davids

Then, when Davids tried to pay the movers with his credit card, the movers said they forgot the machine and told him to pay by e-transfer, which he did reluctantly a few days later.

Davids is now back in Lethbridge, but his furniture has yet to arrive. He says he’s made countless phone calls to iMove, to no avail, and is now considering legal action.

According to Ludzeneks, Davids’ furniture is sitting in a warehouse in Mississauga.

He claims Davids failed to pay promptly, causing his furniture to miss the original shipping date to Alberta. It did arrive there a few weeks later, Ludzeneks said, but was returned to Ontario after two unsuccessful delivery attempts.

“He’s welcome to claim it,” Ludzeneks said about the furniture.

Davids isn’t buying it. He insists he sent the e-transfer on Oct. 8, two days after he received an invoice. He also said he was given a number of delivery times but nothing ever showed up.

“I had to call them constantly, and when I could get them on the phone, they kept putting me off and telling me it would be there soon,” he said. “First it was by Friday, Oct. 10, then it would be there by Sunday, Oct. 12. Then they told me they don’t deliver on the weekend.

“Then they stopped responding to me altogether.”

iMove’s response

‘Some of it is out of our control’

Ludzeneks blamed any delivery problems on “third-party” shipping companies used by iMove. He also told Metro iMove has stopped doing long-distance deliveries due to “inconsistencies” with shipping.

“At the end of the day, the buck stops with us, but some of it is out of our control,” Ludzeneks said. “But if what he says is true, and he wasn’t contacted properly, then yes, he deserved better service.”

Ludzeneks said he plans to reach out to Davids soon and make arrangements to send him his furniture at no extra cost.

A babysitter is just an app away for parents

The person who’s going to look after your kids might be waiting on the other side of your smartphone.

At least, that’s the idea behind fledgling Toronto startup DateNight, which aims to match parents with babysitters through a downloadable app.

“We don’t employ babysitters. We help people connect with them,” explained Elize Shirdel, a 36-year-old with a PhD in computational biology who started working on the app about a year and a half ago.

“The best part is you can request babysitting from your babysitters within, like, five presses of a button.”

The app, which Shirdel said is still in the process of being launched, is not unlike Uber, a tech company that has courted controversy in Toronto and across North America by connecting drivers with people looking for rides.

Alongside Uber and other apps like Airbnb, which helps people temporarily rent out or stay in private residences, Shirdel’s creation counts itself amongst the emerging businesses that rely on a user’s trust in strangers that are found through the Internet.

As such, Shirdel admits, some people approach apps like DateNight with trepidation.

“Asking somebody you don’t know to come to your house is a little bit tricky,” she told the Star while showcasing her app Thursday at a Ryerson University job fair. “People are reluctant until they meet the babysitters.”

To overcome that reluctance, DateNight has a series of checks to ensure not just anybody can sign up to be listed as a babysitter in the app. Shirdel said people should go to the app’s website, where they punch in their name, address and references. They are then contacted by DateNight for a “Skype interview,” where they will be asked about their experience working with kids and whether they have a criminal record, CPR certification and first-aid training.

If the sitter is deemed suitable, they join the list of DateNight sitters that parents can sift through on the app when they’re looking for someone to take care of the kids. Then DateNight helps them set up a time to meet and find out if they’re a fit. But Shirdel stressed that, beyond this initial check — as it’s been since the dawn of humanity — it’s the parents’ job to make the final call about who’s watching over their offspring.

Elize Shirdel, founder of the DateNight babysitting app, at a Ryerson job fair on Thursday. COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

“It’s still up to the parents to find who’s a good fit for their family,” she said. “We just streamline the path to get there.”

Shirdel pointed out that her app is also designed to give babysitters a sense of safety and choice when it comes to whose kids they look after. Parents have to give references, too, and DateNight gets notified every time someone books a babysitter, meaning the company has information about everyone involved.

“I think you can feel ... really vulnerable (looking for babysitting jobs) on Craigslist, especially as a younger woman,” said Naomi Hazlett, 25, who signed up as a DateNight babysitter last November.

“This gives you an extra sense of security.”

Bruce Schneier wrote a 2012 book, Liars and Outliers: Enabling the Trust that Society Needs to Thrive, which probes issues of trust in the digital age. Speaking with the Star on the phone from Germany, Schneier dismissed any fears over apps like DateNight as exaggerated. Such an app, he argued, simply provides a new medium through which to find someone to babysit.

“‘New’ is scary,” said Schneier. “This is just a resource to find babysitters. They shouldn’t abdicate any of that responsibility.”

In the four months since it got off the ground, DateNight has recruited 50 sitters and connected them with about 30 families, Shirdel said. With two kids of her own to support, she hopes that’s just the beginning.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Suspension.

Three police officers face sex assault complaint

Three Toronto police officers are being investigated internally over a sex assault complaint launched by a female colleague.

“The Toronto Police Association is aware of the sexual assault allegations made against three of our officers,” Mike McCormack, president of the Toronto Police Association, confirmed Thursday.

The three accused officers, all men from 51 Division, have been suspended with pay pending the outcome of the investigation, according to McCormack.

The complainant is a female parking enforcement officer, also employed by Toronto police, he said, adding the incident took place some time in “the last couple of weeks.”

No charges have been laid.

A source confirmed the incident took place after hours.

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Politics. MacLeod to exit Ontario PC leadership race

The Canadian Press has learned that Ottawa-area Progressive Conservative Lisa MacLeod will pull out of the party's leadership race on Friday.

A source with MacLeod's campaign confirms she will announce her decision at a news conference scheduled for 11 a.m. in Ottawa.

The source would not say if MacLeod will also announce her intention to quit the provincial party to run federally for the seat soon to be vacated by former foreign affairs minister John Baird.

MacLeod admitted the landscape changed this week after Baird announced he would resign his Ottawa West-Nepean seat in Parliament, and after rival PC leadership candidate Vic Fedeli pulled out of the leadership race.

Fedeli, the former North Bay mayor, threw his support behind perceived front-runner Christine Elliott, saying he hadn't raised enough money to win the race.

MacLeod's camp said she had raised $105,000, but she posted under $60,000 in donations in her first official filing this week.

Barrie MP Patrick Brown, the only PC leadership candidate without a seat in the Ontario legislature, has raised $138,000 so far, and vows to stay in the race until the end, as will London-area MPP Monte McNaughton. THE CANADIAN PRESS

YMCA. New drop-in centre gives homeless youth a place to seek refuge

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Homeless youth in downtown Toronto have a new place to go for help.

The YMCA has opened a facility on Vanauley Street offering a combination of shelter and drop-in services — such as pre-employment counselling and mental-health support — for at-risk youths aged 16 to 24.

It's an upgrade from services the non-profit used to offer at a smaller spot on Queen Street, and the biggest change might be something some people take for granted.

"We held consultations with our residents and found out that one concern for them was the need for privacy," said Louise Smith, YMCA's general manager of youth outreach and intervention.

The new facility, situated in the Alexndra Park community, has 40 single- and double-occupancy shelter rooms, each with its own washroom. People can lock their doors and staff will be available overnight, Smith said.

More space means the building can be used as a warming centre in case of extreme weather alerts.

There's also a street-to-home program, which actively reaches out to homeless youths and lets them know help is available.

Along with counselling, the drop-in space, which can house 50 people at time, offers meals, places to do laundry and computer access.

"We are working with young people, and our job is to help them transition properly into adulthood," Smith said.

Lending a hand

1,150

More than 1,150 people were aided last year by drop-in centres run by the YMCA of Greater Toronto.

This new YMCA building offers both drop-in and shelter services for the homeless youth in Toronto. CONTRIBUTED

Children and instructors congregate at MakerKids in Toronto, an after-school program that is helping teach the technology lessons some say are missing from classrooms. METRO FILE

Computers not just for science classes

Technology. Programming skills need to be integrated into classrooms as a whole, says Mozilla Hive's director

LUKE SIMCOE
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A recent poll shows 80 per cent of Canadians believe students should learn computer-programming skills in school, causing some to question if our education system is doing enough to equip young people for the 21st century.

Computer-programming electives are offered at most secondary schools in Ontario, Ministry of Education spokesman Gary Wheeler said.

But people like Kathryn Meisner, director of the Mozilla Hive project in Toronto, say the bar needs to be higher.

Computers need to be better integrated into classrooms overall, Meisner said.

"It shouldn't just be for the kids who enroll in a computer science class," she said. "It should be included on an everyday basis."

Jennifer Turliuk, co-president of MakerKids in Toronto, agrees.

MakerKids offers after-school technology programs for children, and Turliuk said many of her clients are parents who feel their kids aren't getting enough computer training in school.

"It should really be mandated from the provincial or even federal level and embedded right into the curriculum," she said.

In Toronto, the public school board has created the Digital Lead Learners program, a volunteer network of teachers dedicated to replacing chalkboards with circuit boards.

Adrienne Rigler, who teaches Grades 4 and 5 at Ryerson Community School, said that kind of change is an "essential part of student learning."

"I see a higher level of engagement with technology than I do with paper and pencil," she said.

Rigler lets her students complete their homework using Google Docs, and has introduced her students to Scratch, a program created at MIT that teaches young people basic programming skills.

Unlike Turliuk, Rigler doesn't think the provincial curriculum needs to change. Instead, she wants more money for computers, especially for schools in less affluent areas.

"The only thing we're limited by is resources," she said.

Quoted

"People assume that digital literacy skills are just learning how to code, but they're all the skills you need to participate in the culture, mechanics and citizenship of the web."

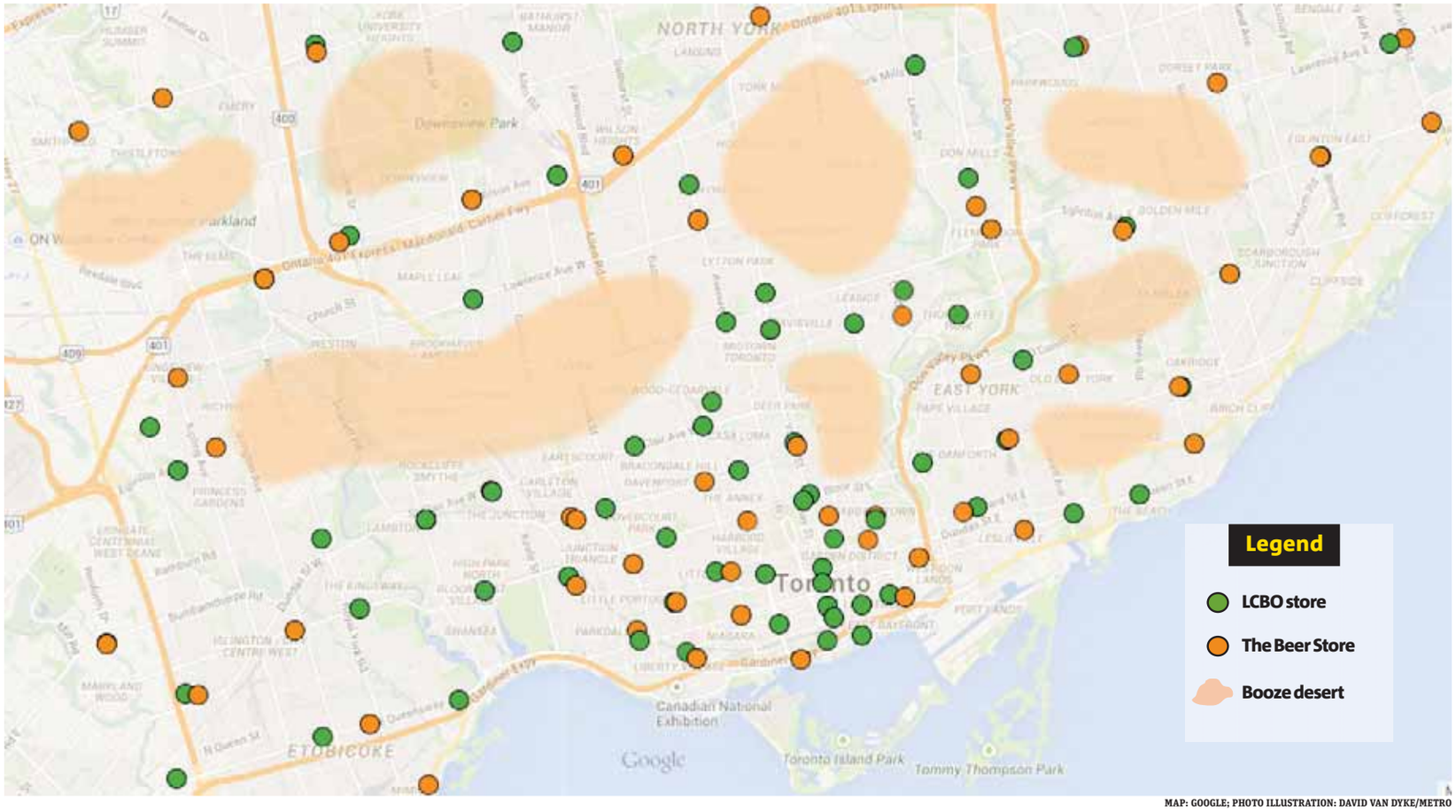
Kathryn Meisner, director of the Mozilla Hive project in Toronto

Building the future

Conducted by Ipsos Reid on behalf of the Canadian Internet Registration Association, a survey shows that a vast majority of those questioned feel teaching young Canadians digital literacy today means a stronger economy tomorrow.

The booze deserts of Toronto

With the revelation that we probably won't see alcohol sold in corner stores any time soon, Metro created this map of every LCBO and Beer Store in the heart of the city. Turns out, plenty of thirsty people live without a retail outlet in sight.



MAP: GOOGLE; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

JESSICA SMITH CROSS
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Toronto's booze deserts are characterized by their relatively dry, LCBO-less climate. In these Beer Store-free areas, the pedestrian can be seen sweating under the strain of carrying a two-four long distances.

If you live in Rexdale, the Upper Beaches, Malvern or almost anywhere along Eglinton West, you know what it's like: walking block after block to quench your thirst. If you live in the ritzy Bridle Path neighbourhood, it's a 20-minute walk — for you or your butler.

A "food desert" is an important concept, defined as areas that are more than a kilometre from a grocery store. People who live there, especially those who don't have cars, lack access to affordable, healthy food and can suffer health consequences as a result.

Booze deserts are, clearly, a little less serious.

Ontarians buy almost all of their beer, wine and spirits at the LCBO and The Beer Store, and that doesn't look like it's going to change any time soon.

Earlier this week, Premier Kathleen Wynne ruled out allowing booze at corner stores.

The dry spots in some areas are easy to spot.

"You can see that west end has a giant gap," noted Indie Alehouse owner Jason Fisher, referring to the vast, bean-shaped area stretching from Bloor West Village to the wide swath of booze desert that covers Eglinton West.

Fisher doesn't really mind — he's a craft brewer with no love for The Beer Store's quasi-monopoly. In fact, he says people who live far from the retailer might just be some of the smartest people in town.

He'd like to see the province allow craft breweries, like his in the Junction, to set up an alternative to The Beer Store.

If you ask him, lack of competition is one of the things driving a dearth of Beer Stores in many areas of the city where retail space costs more money.

"The Beer Store is not dumb. They're going to put a store where it's going to make them money," Fisher said. "Since they have a monopoly on the sale of beer, they put them in cheap places and make you drive there because you have no other choice."

By the numbers

80
LCBO stores in Toronto

62
Beer Stores in Toronto

Jeff Newton, spokesman for The Beer Store, said the retailer actually chooses locations by evaluating demographic shifts and consumer traffic.

LCBO spokeswoman Heather MacGregor said locations are picked carefully. Ensuring stores make money is a factor.

"We do track the performance of each new store on a regular basis and measure it against a sales forecast," she said. "Annual reviews are conducted to make sure those stores are meeting their annual rate of return for capital investments."

Top court to release ruling on right to die

Decision. Landmark case could have far-reaching consequences

The country's top court is releasing what could be a landmark decision Friday on the right of the terminally ill to end their lives — a ruling that could have implications for Canada's aging population, as well as doctors and politicians.

The case has pitted the federal government against the Province of Quebec, divided doctors, and forced religious groups to face off against patients on the verge of dying.

Observers on both sides of the debate agree little, except the three possible outcomes.

The moral, legal and political issues raised by a debate that has polarized the country were sparked by an 89-year-old woman with a degenerative spinal condition who travelled to Switzerland in 2010 to do something she could not do at home in Vancouver: End her life under medical supervision with the counsel, comfort and assistance of her family.

Kay Carter's daughter, Lee, brought the case before the courts in British Columbia and convinced a provincial court judge that a law making it a crime to help someone commit suicide is a violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The decision, overturned on appeal, has snaked its way up to the Supreme Court of Canada where the controversial question of euthanasia, assisted suicide and the sanctity of human life will be revisited more than two decades after the 1993 ruling barring ALS patient Sue Rodriguez from ending her life.

The Canadian Medical Association, which lobbies on behalf of the country's physicians, has said it is prepared to help lawmakers draft new rules if necessary, and recently adopted a policy allowing that in some cases of great suffering it may be appropriate to give in to a patient's request to die.

The coalition of groups opposed to the legalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide are also optimistic about a ruling in their favour.

"It's the only safe decision for our society," said Nicolas Steenhout, director of Vivre dans la Dignité, a Montreal-based organization.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Possible outcomes

- Judges maintain ban on end-of-life options.
- Judges reverse ban on end-of-life options, forcing a revision of Criminal Code laws dealing with murder and aiding or counselling suicide.
- A split ruling to allow assisted suicide but uphold euthanasia ban.

John Tory joins big-city mayors to talk funding hopes

Toronto Mayor John Tory speaks to the media during the Big Cities Summit hosted by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) in Toronto on Thursday. The mayors hope to leverage a looming federal election into billions of dollars worth of commitments from Ottawa for transit and other big-money projects. Big cities account for about two-thirds of the country's population, they noted, but nearly one half of the country's, federal ridings — 142 seats — are in large urban centres.

PHOTO: CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS
TEXT: THE CANADIAN PRESS

Health

New measles case reported in Toronto

The measles count in Ontario rose Thursday, with officials in Toronto reporting they found another adult infected with the disease.

The infected person had received the recommended two doses of vaccine, said Lenore Bromley, media relations manager for Toronto Public Health.

News of the fifth Toronto case came after health authorities in Ontario's Niagara region disclosed they had found a case, a woman who had never been vaccinated.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

State secrets?

Woman detained in China released

A Chinese official says a Canadian, Julia Garratt, detained with her husband on suspicion of stealing state secrets, has been released on bail. Her husband remains in jail. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Jordanians rally against ISIL

Jordanians chant slogans to show their support for the government against terror during a rally in Amman, Jordan, Thursday. Jordanian warplanes bombed ISIL targets on Thursday, state TV said, after Jordan's King Abdullah II vowed to wage a "harsh" war against the militants who control large areas of neighbouring Syria and Iraq. RAAD ADAYLEH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Leaders back new Ukraine peace plan

Talks. German chancellor and French president to meet Putin on Friday in Moscow

Carrying a peace plan that reportedly incorporates proposals from Russia, the leaders of Germany and France met Thursday with Ukrainian Petro Poroshenko in a hastily arranged mission to bring an end to the accelerated fighting in the east of the country.

The trip by German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Francois Hollande, who will follow by meeting Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday in Moscow, came as concerns rose about whether the U.S. would grant lethal aid to Ukraine and as NATO formed a quick-reaction force of 5,000 soldiers in response to Russia's increased military muscle-flexing.

The high-level diplomacy came as resurgent fighting killed eight more people in eastern Ukraine and fuelled fears the conflict is threatening Europe's overall security. More than 5,300 people have been killed since the fighting started in April.

The fighting in eastern Ukraine between Russia-backed separatist rebels and Ukrainian forces has intensified sharply over the past two weeks. Russia vehemently denies that it is providing equipment or troops for the insurgents, but U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry sharply rejected that denial.

The top NATO commander, U.S. Air Force Gen. Philip Breedlove, said Thursday that Russia continues to supply the separatists with heavy, state-of-the-art weapons, air defences and fighters.

In comments to reporters after the talks with Poroshenko, Kerry urged Russia to show its commitment to a peaceful, diplomatic solution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine by ceasing its military support for the separatists and bringing them to the negotiation table.

"Our choice is diplomacy," Kerry said, making no mention of providing Ukraine with lethal military aid.

At a later news conference with Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Kerry said President Barack Obama "is reviewing all his options; among those options obviously is the possibility of providing defensive systems to Ukraine."

"We are not interested in a proxy war. Our objective is to change Russia's behaviour," he said.

Nonetheless, U.S. lethal aid to Ukraine would likely intensify the conflict and further polarize the West and Russia. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taiwan. Crash survivor says engine felt wrong

From the start of the flight in Taiwan's capital, survivor Huang Jin-sun suspected trouble.

"There was some sound next to me. It did not feel right shortly after takeoff. The engine did not feel right," the 72-year-old man told ETTV television Thursday from his hospital bed. Huang was one of 15 people who survived when the TransAsia Airways turbojet carrying 58 people crashed Wednesday into a river minutes after taking off in Taipei. At least 32 people died and 11 are still missing.

Moments before the plane banked sharply and crashed, one of its pilots told the control tower, "Mayday, mayday, engine flameout," according to an aviation official who asked not to be identified.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Law. Fatal chokehold case judge to hear arguments

Two months after a grand jury declined to press criminal charges in the police killing of an unarmed New York City man, a state judge must decide whether to disclose details of the secret proceedings.

The New York Civil Liberties Union and other petitioners have gone to court on Staten Island to demand that Judge William Garnett open the record in the Eric Garner case — a position opposed by Richmond County District Attorney Daniel Donovan. Garnett is set to listen to arguments at a hearing on Thursday morning.

In court papers, the NYCLU cited the outcry over the grand jury's decision not to indict Daniel Pantaleo — the white New York Police Department officer seen on a widely watched video putting the unarmed black man in what the medical examiner called a fatal chokehold — as a compelling reason to make an exception to the long-standing practice of keeping the process secret. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Argentina

Gov't focuses on former spy chief in death of prosecutor

The spy novel-like drama that has gripped Argentina since the mysterious death of President Cristina Fernandez's nemesis took a critical new twist Thursday when investigators called one of the country's most enigmatic spy chiefs to testify before them.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Boko Haram

Extremists under attack turn fury on Cameroonians

Nigerian Islamic extremists on the run from a massive, three-nation offensive took revenge Thursday on civilians in neighbouring Cameroon, shooting and burning scores to death and razing mosques and churches. France's president warned that the world is not doing enough to end the wanton killings by Boko Haram.

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DVD rentals

Redbox pulling out of Canada

Chicago-based DVD and Blu-ray rental company Redbox is shutting down its Canadian operations after failing to generate sufficient business at its 1,400 kiosks across the country. The last date for rentals will be Feb. 13, with the last return date on March 5, company president Mark Horak said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 80.49¢ (+0.90¢)

TSX 15,124.92 (+129.27)

OIL $50.48 US (+ $2.03)

GOLD $1,262.70 US (- $1.80)

Natural gas: $2.600 US (- 6.2¢)
Dow Jones: 17,884.88 (+211.86)

Liquidation sale misses its Target

Retail. Promised 30% discount items hard to find, leaving bargain hunters frustrated

An employee hangs sale signs at a Target store on the first day of its closing liquidation sale in Toronto on Thursday. DARREN CALABRESE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bargain hunters who expected to unearth major deals at their local Target stores on Thursday, the first day of its liquidation sale, were sure to be disappointed once they got a look at the prices.

Store signs that promised discounts of up to 30 per cent yielded to shelves with price cuts mostly in the 10- to 20-per-cent range.

The elusive deeper discounts quickly became a conversation piece for customers who roamed the store aisles, discussing the savings, or lack of them, on their cellphones.

Despite some complaints, the 30-per-cent discount did exist — if shoppers were looking for cosmetics or women's accessories. Most everything else in the store was reduced by less, with clearance sales on items such as diapers, dishes and most electronics discounted by 10 per cent.

Apple products, such as the iPad and iPod Touch, were just five per cent off.

Customer traffic spiked at Target locations across the country compared with an average day at the store.

Lineups began forming outside one location in Toronto before sunrise as hopeful shoppers looked to be first inside for the best buys.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Hacking. Sony Pictures head gets reassigned

Amy Pascal, Sony Pictures Entertainment co-chair
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Amy Pascal will step down as co-chair of Sony Pictures Entertainment and head of the film studio, nearly three months after a massive hack hit the company and revealed embarrassing emails.

Pascal, one of the most powerful women in Hollywood and the force behind such critical and commercial hits as The Social Network and American Hustle, will launch a major new production venture at the studio focused on movies, television and theatre, Sony Pictures said.

Her career with Sony has spanned nearly 20 years.

During the hack, Pascal came under fire for racist remarks about U.S. President Barack Obama's presumed choice in movies that surfaced in leaked emails.

Pascal also faced criticism for green-lighting the film that may have inspired the hacking to begin with: The Interview.

Pascal will shift to the new venture in May. Sony Pictures will finance Pascal under a four-year contract.

Since Pascal has led the studio, Sony Pictures has amassed over $46 billion US in global theatrical box-office revenue and 315 Academy Award nominations.

Some of the films Pascal shepherded include the last three James Bond films, The Da Vinci Code, Adaptation, Eat Pray Love, The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo, Moneyball and Zero Dark Thirty.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

[1]Corolla CE: All in lease payment is semi-monthly for 60 months with $1200 down payment. Includes freight and fees, HST extra. [2]All in finance payment is bi-weekly for 84 months, includes freight and fees, HST extra.[3] All in price includes freight and fees, HST extra. [1]Rav4 LE FWD: All in lease payment is semi-monthly for 60 months with $1300 down payment. Includes freight and fees, HST extra. [2]All in finance payment is bi-weekly for 84 months, includes freight and fees, HST extra. [3]All in price includes freight and fees, HST extra.

*[1] Make no payments for 90 days when you purchase finance a new unregistered 2015 Toyota vehicle through Toyota Financial Services Canada. Offer applies on approved credit to retail customers who purchase and take delivery by February 2, 2015. The first monthly payment will be deferred for 60 days (until the 90th day of the contract) and finance contracts will be extended accordingly. Interest charges will not accrue during the first 60 days of the contract. After 60 days, interest starts to accrue and the purchaser will repay principal and interest over the term of the contract.

TTC BOARD APPROVES BUDGETS; NEXT STOP CITY COUNCIL

ANDY BYFORD
CEO
TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

This week, the TTC Board voted to approve the budget that my team drew up to enhance service across the TTC network.

Building on the proposals that we first tabled last fall, our submission sought funding to restore the all day, every day bus service that was cut in 2011 and to reduce wait times and crowding on services across Toronto that were affected by further subsidy cuts in 2012.

Our plans also include the introduction of additional express bus services in off-peak times; adding up to two more subway trains on Lines 1 and 2 during morning and afternoon rush hours; and expansion of the Blue Night Network to improve service for shift workers and late-night revellers.

When added to the increased funding for further measures to improve service reliability, this budget constitutes an unprecedented investment in service and the culmination of three years' worth of lobbying for increased, sustainable funding for the TTC.

While TTC subsidy per rider remains by far the lowest in North America, this additional funding does enable us to accelerate work to improve the quality, reliability and punctuality of your service. Since 2010, the subsidy that we receive has actually declined by 15 per cent in real terms, but we have nevertheless focused all our efforts on making do with what we were given and on getting better at the basics of running a transit service.

Details of the timing of the introduction of additional service, on top of restoring previously cut service, will now be developed by my team. The final step in the approval process will come in mid March when City Council considers the subsidy request and gives us authority to proceed.

Investment in these new and restored services does come at a cost, not all of which can be covered by increased subsidy. So we will need to increase the price of a token by 10 cents and to adjust the cost of the Adult Metropass – something that we did not do lightly.

But, coupled with the Mayor's initiative to introduce free travel for children aged 12 and under, I believe this is a very positive package of improvements and a major step forward in our goal to transform service and give you a transit system that makes Toronto proud.

EMPLOYEE PROFILE

Name: Moe Leblanc
Position: Station Collector
Years of Service: 26

As the first person most people see in the morning, I make a point of brightening their day with a smile and a kind greeting. I've gotten to know most of my regular customers, some of whom swing by with coffee, which is always a treat. The most memorable day of my career was attending my dad's retirement in 1997. He worked as a Senior Material Handler and instilled a sense of pride in the TTC which I've always cherished

Weekly Customer Service Report

Week ending February 4, 2015

	Actual %	Target %
Subway – Deliver a punctual service	97%	97%
Bus – Deliver reliable headway	56%*	65%
Streetcar – Deliver reliable headway	59%*	70%

* Feb. 2 - snow storm

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY – TTC DUTY STATION MANAGER BARRINGTON RICKETTS

Growing up in Jamaica, Barry's parents instilled in him the importance of the love of God, family and education. Following their guidance, he attended Kingston College – a renowned school with a competitive entrance exam. In 1986, at age 25, Barry followed his heart to Toronto to be with his wife Michelle, who had emigrated a few years prior. In 1993, he got a job at the TTC and spent 16 years as a Bus Operator. During that time, he completed two degrees at York University – a Bachelor of Arts in Geography and a Bachelor of Education. After steadily moving through the ranks at the TTC, he took a job as Duty Station Manager. In his spare time, he dedicates his energy to his church, wife and three children, Barry Jr., Sammy, and Jerusha. Barry continues to give back to his home country through the Kingston College Old Boys Association – an organization that meets annually to fundraise for their alma mater. We asked Barry:

What's your favourite spot to relax? • Sugar Beach. I find something serine and relaxing about the area. I end my shift at 3 p.m., so it's a nice place to wait for my wife, who finishes work around 5 p.m., at Women's College Hospital.

What's your favourite Jamaican restaurant? • Either Oxtail at famous Albert's at St Clair west and Vaughn or Randy's Patty on Eglinton at Oakwood.

What is your favourite hangout? • Kingston College Old Boys Association annual dinner and dance.

WHAT YOUR INVESTMENT WILL GET YOU

On Monday, Feb. 2, the TTC Board approved a budget that includes an unprecedented investment in new and enhanced transit service. These new investments will provide the following improved services to TTC customers:

- Restoration of all day, every day bus service that was cut in 2011.
- Ten-minute or better bus and streetcar service on key routes from 6 a.m. to 1 a.m. six days a week (9 a.m. on Sundays).
- Reduced wait times and crowding at off-peak times.
- Reduced wait times and crowding on 21 of the busiest routes during morning and afternoon rush hours.
- Proof-of-payment and all-door boarding on all streetcar routes.
- Expansion of the Express Bus network, adding four new routes to a network that serves 34 million rides annually.
- Expanding the Blue Night Network, adding 12 routes to the 22-route network that serves 4 million rides annually.
- Adding up to two additional subway trains on Lines 1 and 2 during morning and afternoon rush hours.
- Route management improvements designed to reduce short-turns, bunching and gapping of bus and streetcar routes.
- Additional resources to focus on subway reliability around signals, track and communications systems.

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Visit ttc.ca for details about routes, schedules and planned construction.
Facebook.com/TTCnotices
Youtube.com/OfficialTTCchannel

TCONNECT WI-FI:
Free Wi-Fi is now available at select TTC subway stations. Visit tconnect.ca or ttc.ca for details.

VOICES

HANDS OFF MY CHIANTI, GOVERNMENT

THE KOHLER REPORT
By Rebecca Kohler

For the most part, Canada hasn't dealt with Prohibition since the 1920s (though P.E.I. was dry until 1948, suckers). I'm not saying we're dealing with Prohibition now, but if you take a look around this country, it might feel like you're at least dealing with Prohibition's stubborn grandchild.

For a brief moment, it looked like the idea of selling beer in corner stores was back on the table here in Ontario, but that wish/dream/desperate longing was thwarted this week when Premier Kathleen Wynne announced that while changes are coming, convenience-store beer would not be one of them.

Ontario is not alone in its archaic, condescending liquor laws. Aside from Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador, most provinces do not allow the sale of beer in corner stores, instead selling the beverage in a mix of highly regulated public and privately-owned stores. Why is buying beer almost as annoying as renewing my health card?

The history is deep. In most provinces, when Prohibition came to an end and average citizens were again able to legally purchase alcohol, they needed a permit, kind of like a driver's licence, to do so.

Every time you went to your Liquor Control Board, you had to show this permit, and the clerk would make a record of what you purchased. Man, I'd be pretty embarrassed if someone had a record of every trip I've made to a liquor store. It would be a novel by now. I'd title it Chianti: A Love Story.

So it's great that things have changed a smidge since early post-Prohibition Canada. I'm also thrilled I'm able to vote as a woman. But it's still no picnic. Meanwhile, you can buy booze in grocery and convenience stores in the U.K., New Zealand, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Malta — the list is pretty much never-ending. In Japan you can buy beer from street vending machines! And in the States, you can get liquor at the pharmacy, which admittedly grosses me out. Picking up your gout medication at the same place you'll be scoring a bottle of Jack? Settle down, now. But that said, these countries are not falling apart at the seams and they are not overrun by zombie-like drunks.

What is the worry? That people will all of a sudden start guzzling beer just because it's there? That we'll all turn into Barney Gumble from the Simpsons? I guess our governments think this is best for us. But, *is it*? Think of a hectic Saturday when you have a bunch of errands to run: dry cleaning, a stop at Canadian Tire, a kid's birthday party drop-off... Now grocery shopping, and while you're picking out a roast beef, you realize, "Frig. I have to go to the liquor store." Now you're late, driving in a rush, you're stressed, you forget to pick up your kids, they develop abandonment issues — pandemonium!

Booze hogs, not bozos

The governments aren't stupid. They saw how much money bootleggers made during Prohibition and they wanted a piece of it.

Then there are places like Nunavut where there are no liquor stores — you have to order alcohol by mail — a precaution taken to help curb alcoholism and stave off drinking-related crimes.

Sadly, this has not helped, and thanks to bootleggers and other providers of illegally sourced alcohol, they're still boozing it up there.

This has less to do with protecting us from our bad habits and more to do with money. The governments aren't stupid. They saw how much money bootleggers made during Prohibition and they wanted a piece of it. In fact, in Ontario, it was the government that decided to start selling alcohol again after the people voted against the idea (don't even get me started on those bozos).

And to this day, the government profits greatly every time you get your bevvy on — because it knows people are going to drink and they will find a way to do it. Sure, I whine about the walk to the liquor store, but does it stop me from going? No way. I'd crawl there if I had to.

This is a charade! The government "protects us" by keeping our liquor in a cookie jar on a high shelf, but it's like, "Dude, I know where the ladder is. Could we just keep the cookies on the counter? I have things to do."

Rebecca Kohler is a stand-up comic, writer, actor, gymnast, lawyer and chemist. (Some of this isn't true.) Follow her on Twitter @becca_kohler

Happy face/Sad face

From double disgraces to temper tantrums, Metro weighs in on the news that made headlines this week:

LYING LANCE

Here we are again, shaking our heads at Lance Armstrong. This time it's over the disgraced cyclist's admission that he hit a couple of parked cars in Aspen, then let his girlfriend take the blame. Armstrong said he was trying to protect his teenagers from seeing his name in the papers again. Well played, Lance. Well played.

A MILE IN HIS SHOES

A Detroit man who walks 34 kilometres every day to get to work may soon be getting a much-needed car — at least — thanks to a crowdfunding campaign that's raised more than $230,000. James Robertson, who makes $11 an hour at a job not accessible by transit, has been walking to work in all weather for 10 years. He's never been late and never missed a day.

TODDLERS AND TIARAS AND TANTRUMS

This week in sore-loser news, the runner-up in the Miss Amazon pageant snatched the tiara off the winner's head, threw it down and stormed off stage like, well, a toddler. Sheislane Hayalla claimed her rival, Carol Toledo, bought the title.

NENSHI MANIA

Finally, a Canadian mayor is making international headlines for all the right reasons. Calgary's Mayor Naheed Nenshi has been named the best mayor in the world by U.K. research group City Mayors Foundation. Nenshi beat out 120 other mayors to win the title. (Cowboy) hats off to you, Mr. Nenshi!

PUT DOWN THE PHONE!

It's a sign of the times, we suppose. This photo of a boater in California has gone viral after the man was seen texting while a humpback whale breached beside him. Witnesses said he never looked away from his phone and missed the whole thing.

metro

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It's our fault that movies are dull

Analysis. As audiences flock to see films based on comic books, video games and old TV shows, more serious and original movies get lost in the shuffle

Channing Tatum and Mila Kunis star in Jupiter Ascending. CONTRIBUTED

In Focus

RICHARD CROUSE

Who's to blame for Hollywood's current lack of originality?

Are the suits too eager to green-light reboots and sequels?

Are screenwriters so uninspired that they can't think past remaking their favourite 1980s TV shows?

Do actors only consider characters based on video games?

Of course not.

The people responsible for the movie doldrums these days live in your mirrors and selfies.

That's right. If you go to the cinema and didn't check out Birdman, Whiplash or Obvious Child, but did go see Guardians of the Galaxy 25 times, you forced Hollywood's hand, guaranteeing another 10 years of the big-screen exploits of comic-book characters, Rocket Racoon and company.

Guardians is a fun movie that people liked and Hollywood is in the business of giving moviegoers what they want.

But the fear is that a constant stream of familiar-feeling films could create a less-discerning audience. If you are fed a steady diet of dog food, eventually you'll get used to the taste.

Birdman is an accessible and entertaining movie. But with a total gross of less than one weekend's business for Guardians, it's unlikely to inspire a Birdman 2: No Plucking Way.

However, a bigger box office take for films like Birdman could inspire more adventurous films, as an antidote to the slew of movies with numbers in their titles.

Big-budget Hollywood doesn't often take the path less trodden.

People went to see Inception, but I would argue the reference point for that movie was director Christopher Nolan — hot off the Batman streak — and not the unique story.

Less successful were originals like Edge of Tomorrow, despite the usually winning mix of great reviews and Tom Cruise, and Transcendence, the computer hard drive horror that brought Johnny Depp's box office average way down.

Despite those high-profile failures, this weekend, Warner Brothers has gone off the map to show support for an original story from The Matrix directors, the Wachowskis.

Jupiter Ascending is a space opera about genetically engineered warrior Caine (Channing Tatum) who helps human janitor Jupiter Jones (Mila Kunis) take her place as heir to the galaxy.

Big stars, big-name directors and a new story should appeal, but already the knives are out.

"Jupiter Ascending looks like a great movie," wrote @RickIngraham on twitter, "to never see."

Jupiter Ascending will rise or fall based on audience interest, but if it tanks, it'll be harder for other unusual stories to get made.

There are already at least 30 sequels, reboots and spin-offs scheduled for 2015 — everything from Star Wars: The Force Awakens to Paul Blart: Mall Cop II — so unless you want another Daddy Day Care reboot in 2016, get out of your comfort zone and see something new and original today.

Richard's Ratings

SpongeBob SquarePants: A Sponge Out of Water

Seventh Son

Outcast

Love, Rosie

SCENE

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From Ned Stark to an Internet meme

Actor interview.
Sean Bean talks about web fame and working with the Wachowskis on Jupiter Ascending

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Sean Bean plays a human-bee hybrid helping out earthling Jupiter (Mila Kunis) in Jupiter Ascending. CONTRIBUTED

Sean Bean has made a career in big-budget genre fare, from James Bond to The Lord of the Rings to Game of Thrones.

His latest sends him to outer space with co-directors Andy and Lana Wachowski for Jupiter Ascending, in which Bean plays a human-bee hybrid helping an unwitting earthling (Mila Kunis) embrace her true heritage as one of the most powerful beings in the universe.

That career of his, by the way, has also inspired an entire sub-genre of Internet memes, remixing his more famous lines for commentary on sports, politics, pop culture or anything, really. Not that he necessarily knows what a meme is, exactly.

When you're working with the Wachowskis, do you ever play one off of the other, since you have two directors?
You mean try and get one pissed off with the other one?

Say you don't necessarily like the direction one of them's giving you...
No, no (laughs). It was quite good, really, because if Andy was directing, Lana would take a back seat, and vice versa.

It was actually kind of hard to distinguish because they were so kind of focused and singular in what they wanted to get.

They have kind of different styles. I guess Andy was a bit more physically oriented than Lana. She was more cerebral and low-key in the sense that she wanted a very kind of even reading, a very natural kind of rendition.

I guess, because we were in a sci-fi film, it's quite easy to push it maybe too much, and she didn't like that. She liked it quieter, which I totally agree with. It's an interesting kind of thing to think about. People don't actually declaim everything. Every scene you're in, if you've got one line, sometimes it's important but it's not, you know, in the scheme of things it's just a simple, natural reading. That was quite interesting, listening to them and improving it in terms of what we were doing.

More online!

- As a special treat, we got Sean Bean to indulge us by doing a live-reading of some of the more ridiculous Sean Bean Memes we could come up with. Go online to metronews.ca to see the results. You won't be sorry.

How aware are you of the Internet memes built up around your characters?
Kind of, I think. Yes, I saw one that said, "One does not simply walk into Bramall Lane," which I thought was quite good because my soccer team is Sheffield United.

We played the Spurs the other night, and that was the thing: "One does not simply walk into Bramall Lane."

What is it like to actually be an Internet meme?
Is that what it is, a meme? I'm a meme? It's quite good, yeah. And it can be applied to lots of situations, that "One does not simply …" line. Yeah, it's great.

Also, on behalf of all people named Ned, I wanted to thank you for giving us someone cool in pop culture with our name.
Oh yeah. Ned Stark, yeah. I don't really meet a lot of Neds. It's an unusual name. What's it short for, Edward?

That's a good name.

My mom seems to think so.
Definitely a good name, yeah.

Kinky sex can be funny, disturbing or loving

Sinful sizzle. Movies that explore the world of alternative sexuality often tell deeper tales of human connection

CHRIS ALEXANDER
scene@metronews.ca

While negatively reviewing Ken Russell's wildly kinky 1984 thriller Crimes of Passion, the late, great Roger Ebert said, "sex is an activity of great and serious importance to its participants but, as a spectator sport, it has a strange way of turning into comedy."

Certainly, Russell, enfant terrible that he was, took great delight in orchestrating scenes of graphic, unnatural S&M sexuality in that bizarre film. But Crimes of Passion was not camp.

It was really just one of many controversial motion pictures that use extreme kink as a tool to tell deeper tales of extreme human connection.

With the release of Peter Strickland's deeply kinky romance The Duke of Burgundy, opening this weekend, and the filmed adaptation of E.L James' Fifty Shades of Grey opening on Valentine's Day weekend, we take a look at some of the big screen's most excessive forays into alternative carnal knowledge.

The Night Porter (1974)
Liliana Cavani's dark, controversial sado-masochistic drama is as demented as they come, detailing an ongoing relationship between a concentration camp survivor played by Charlotte Rampling and her former Nazi captor. Love stories don't get stranger than this. And yes, Ebert hated it.

Blue Velvet (1986)
David Lynch's masterpiece of small-town mystery and murder is, at its core, an S&M love triangle. But while Dennis Hopper's wheezing villain Frank Booth treats Isabella Rossellini as an outlet for his violent insanity, her masochistic lovemaking with Kyle McLachlan is tender and affectionate. A work of great beauty — and perversity.

The Duke of Burgundy is a master-slave lesbian romance, and a must-see film, says critic Chris Alexander. CONTRIBUTED

Exit to Eden (1994)
Sitcom king Gary Marshall takes Anne Rice's moving and hyper-erotic sado-masochistic romance novel and, seemingly agreeing with Ebert's sentiments, flips it into a sex-soaked slapstick comedy, inventing goofball roles for Rosie O'Donnell and Dan Akroyd as leather-clad cops snooping around an S&M resort, and decimating the dirty dignity of the book. Rice was none too pleased.

Nymphomaniac (2014)
Lars von Trier's magnum pornographic opus is in essence an inspiring study in female empowerment, although one exploding with jaw-dropping sequences of mind-bending kinky sex and violence. Charlotte Gainsbourg delivers the performance of a lifetime, even when using her body as a receptacle for some of the most extreme debauchery ever seen on screen.

The Duke of Burgundy

Peter Strickland's gorgeously designed and directed master-slave lesbian romance is a delicate, surreal examination of an older intellectual and her youthful protégée, with the older woman trying to hold on to her lover by indulging in her basest perverted fantasies. Although decidedly adult, there is refreshingly no nudity or explicit sex in the film. Never has the idea of a human toilet seemed so innocent. A must-see.

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Animated

The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out of Water

Director. Paul Tibbitt

Stars. Tom Kenny

SpongeBob SquarePants, the world's favourite sea-dwelling invertebrate, comes ashore to our world for his most super-heroic adventure yet.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: 77% **Audience:** + 89%

Drama

Seventh Son

Director. Sergey Bodrov

Stars. Jeff Bridges, Julianne Moore

In a time long past, an evil is about to be unleashed that will reignite the war between the forces of the supernatural and humankind once more. Master Gregory is a knight who had imprisoned the malevolently powerful witch, Mother Malkin, centuries ago. But now she has escaped and is seeking vengeance.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: No reviews yet **Audience:** 51%

Comedy

Jupiter Ascending

Director. Andy Wachowski, Lana Wachowski

Stars. Mila Kunis, Channing Tatum

From the streets of Chicago to the far-flung galaxies whirling through space, Jupiter Ascending tells the story of Jupiter Jones (Mila Kunis), who was born under a night sky, with signs predicting she was destined for great things.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: 37% **Audience:** + 97%

Comedy/Romance

Love, Rosie

Director. Christian Ditter

Stars. Lily Collins

Since the moment they met at age five, Rosie and Alex have been best friends, facing the highs and lows of growing up side by side. A fleeting shared moment, one missed opportunity, and the decisions that follow send their lives in completely different directions. As each navigates the complexities of life and love they always find their way back to each other.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: 29% **Audience:** + 88%

Action

Outcast

Director. Nick Powell

Stars. Nicolas Cage, Hayden Christensen

When the heir of the Imperial throne becomes the target of an assassination by his despised older brother, the young prince must flee the kingdom and seek protection. His only hope for survival is a reluctant war-weary crusader named Jacob, who must overcome his own personal demons and rally the assistance of a mythical outlaw.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: No reviews yet **Audience:** + 83%

Comedy

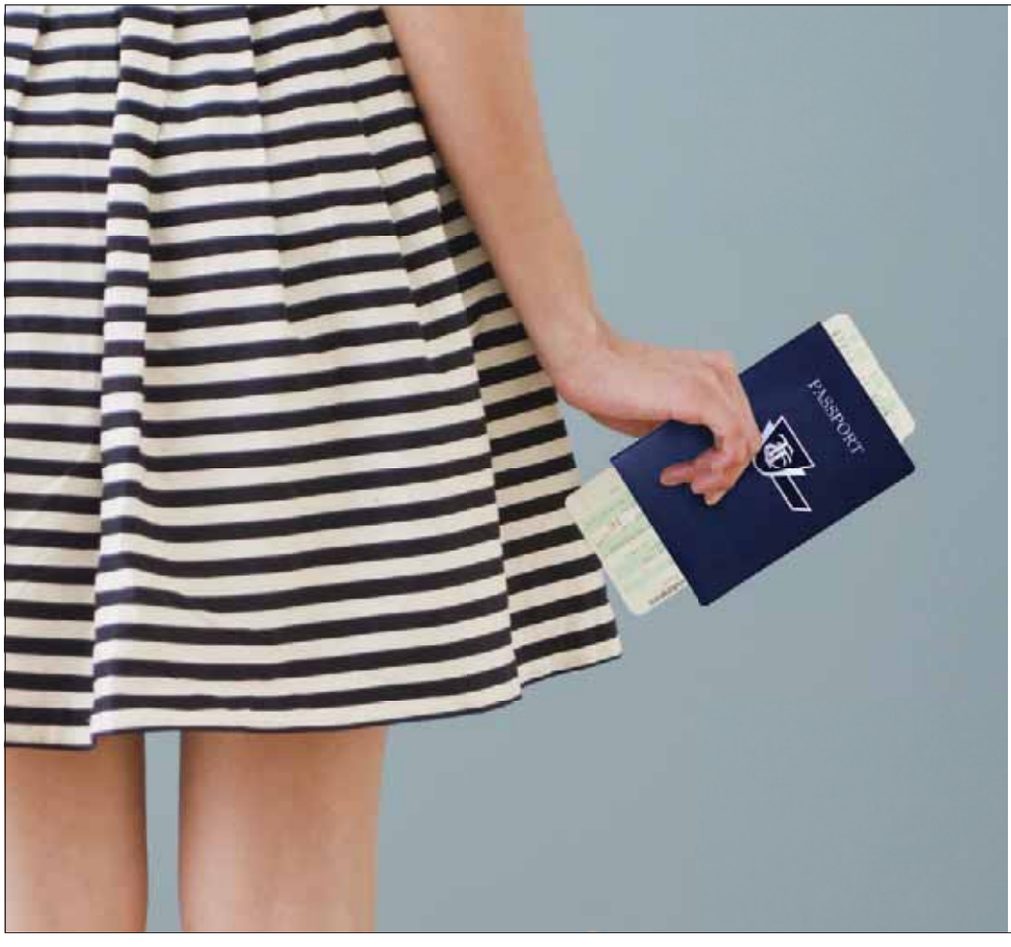
The Voices

Director. Marjane Satrapi

Stars. Ryan Reynolds

Jerry is a seemingly normal man trying to succeed in his new job at the Milton Bathtub Factory. He lives in a normal apartment the type you would expect from a young bachelor with his dog, Bosco, and his cat, Mr. Whiskers. Yet something seems off. He meets Fiona, an attractive English girl from accounting. Jerry immediately takes a liking to Fiona and goes home to tell his pets about her. And surprisingly, they answer.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: 85% **Audience:** + 94%



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Lego Movie songwriter is sorry for the earworm

Awards season. Jaunty tune called Everything is Awesome has gotten a bit too ubiquitous for musician's relatives

A still from the Lego Movie CONTRIBUTED

Songwriter Joshua Bartholomew CONTRIBUTED

Canadian-reared songwriter Joshua Bartholomew and his wife Lisa Rae Harriton co-wrote the earworm Everything is Awesome from The Lego Movie — and he's very sorry.

"I've apologized to so many people," Bartholomew said in a recent telephone interview. "I live in L.A. now but most of my family is back in Canada, and many of them are educators, teachers.

"I got so many emails and texts saying: 'What have you done?' All their students were singing it."

Bartholomew and Harriton, who together go by Jo Li, were invited aboard the Lego project by the movie's studio after Shawn Patterson crafted the song's first draft.

Now, the jaunty tune is in the running at Sunday's 57th Grammy Awards (for best song written for visual media) and at the Oscars on Feb. 22 (for best original song), although Patterson is the only contributor named on the Oscar nod.

The pair reworked a "couple things" from Patterson's version, changed lyrics and, most drastically, altered the production in their own take, which they sang together. That recording of the song appears in the film, while a version by Calgary's Tegan and Sara was released as a single.

Bartholomew, 30, says producers requested a tune that served a dual purpose.

"First they wanted it to be a song that was this oppressive, Orwellian, catchy sort of song that brainwashed everybody in the Lego community to follow their rules," he explained."But it had to turn around at the end of the movie and become their anthem of freedom."

Bartholomew has written songs for Emerson Drive (Let Your Love Speak) and Esthero (Over) while releasing music under his own name as well. He says he's in the process of getting a band off the ground with Nick Perri, brother of Jar of Hearts singer Christina Perri.

But this is certainly a game-changing hit for the cheerful Bartholomew, who is now settled down south.

His dad was in the military, and Bartholomew grew up on the move, spending most of his life in Alliston, Ont. His musical parents surrounded him with instruments and he learned drums, piano, guitar and bass before his adolescence was through.

"You have a lot of time in Canada in the winter," he chuckled. "It gets cold. You hole up inside and figure out how to get stuff done."

In January 2011, Bartholomew wandered down to L.A., intending to meet with publishers for a few weeks. He didn't leave. He lived in a trailer and built the social circle that eventually helped him and his wife land the blockbuster Lego gig.

"Now my wife and I have a house. I sold the trailer," he said. "I do miss it though. I grew up in Canada, camping in the summer for the whole summer by the lake. I'm definitely a nomad by nature."

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Wishful winners vs. likely winners

The Grammy Awards go live Sunday and you've forgotten who was nominated, haven't you? It's all right. Here are the nominations for the main awards. The ones we think will win are in green, and the ones we hope will win are in purple.

Record of the Year
- Fancy — Iggy Azalea featuring Charli XCX
- Chandelier — Sia
- Stay with Me (Darkchild Version) — Sam Smith
- Shake It Off — Taylor Swift
- All About That Bass — Meghan Trainor

Album of the Year
- Morning Phase — Beck
- Beyoncé — Beyoncé
- x — Ed Sheeran
- In the Lonely Hour — Sam Smith
- G I R L — Pharrell Williams

Song of the Year
- All About That Bass
- Chandelier
- Shake It Off
- Stay with Me (Darkchild Version)
- Take Me to Church

Best New Artist
- Iggy Azalea
- Bastille
- Brandy Clark
- HAIM
- Sam Smith

Best Pop Solo Performance
- All of Me (Live) — John Legend
- Chandelier — Sia
- Stay With Me (Darkchild Version) — Sam Smith
- Shake It Off — Taylor Swift
- Happy (Live) — Pharrell Williams

Best Pop Duo/Group Performance
- Fancy — Iggy Azalea feat. Charli XCX
- A Sky Full of Stars — Coldplay
- Say Something — A Great Big World and Christina Aguilera
- Bang Bang — Jessie J, Ariana Grande, & Nicki Minaj
- Dark Horse — Katy Perry feat. Juicy J

Best Pop Vocal Album
- Ghost Stories — Coldplay
- Bangerz — Miley Cyrus
- My Everything — Ariana Grande
- Prism — Katy Perry
- x — Ed Sheeran
- In the Lonely Hour — Sam Smith

Best Rap Album
- The New Classic – Iggy Azalea
- Because the Internet — Childish Gambino
- Nobody's Smiling – Common
- The Marshall Mathers LP 2 — Eminem
- Oxymoron — Schoolboy Q
- Blacc Hollywood — Wiz Khalifa

MATTHEW LEE/METRO U.S.

When you get music's biggest names — and egos — all in one room, you can expect drama to ensue. From frenemies, to relationship drama, and trash talk about who really deserves to win, the 57th Grammy Awards are shaping up to be the most controversial yet. Here's what to keep an eye out for

EMILY LAUREND
Metro in New York City

5 controversies about this year's Grammys

Everyone has an opinion about Iggy Azalea

As soon as it was announced that Iggy Azalea was nominated for Best Rap Album (up against Childish Gambino, Common, Schoolboy Q, Wiz Khalifa and Eminem), musicians didn't hold back declaring how they felt, especially those who feel she is appropriating black culture, including Q-Tip and Solange Knowles. Most publicly, Azealia Banks slammed her in an interview with Hot 97 saying, "The Grammys are supposed to be awards for artistic excellence. Iggy Azalea is not excellent." Azalea also has a public feud going on with Eminem, also nominated, after he alluded to rape while mentioning her in his song Vegas. Given all the drama, Best Rap Album is the award on everyone's mind.

Iggy Azalea GETTY IMAGES

Beyoncé GETTY IMAGES

Sam Smith rumoured by some to beat out Beyoncé

Nominees for the night's biggest award, Album of the Year, include Beck, Beyoncé, Ed Sheeran, Sam Smith and Pharrell Williams. While Beyoncé has become the most nominated female artist in Grammy history with 46 nominations in all (including 17 wins), insiders predict that Sam Smith will overtake the queen. It's a new artist versus a proven pro and the competition is fierce.

Will Selena Gomez show up with Zedd?

Between their flirty Instagrams and constant sightings together, the rumour mill is abuzz that Zedd has replaced Justin Bieber as the leading man in Gomez's life. But seeing as though they haven't made things "official" yet, the red carpet watch is in full effect. Will they use this moment as their chance to confirm the relationship. You watching, Biebs?

Selena Gomez and Zedd GETTY IMAGES

Katy Perry GETTY IMAGES

The Bad Blood between Taylor Swift and Katy Perry continues

Swift and Perry still haven't buried the hatchet for their public frenemy drama, and given that both singers are nominated, they'll both to be there, with their game faces on. How far away will they be sitting from each other? Will they run into each other on the red carpet or at any after parties? Will they shock everyone by posing for a photo together? One thing is sure, we'll all be watching.

Will Ariana Grande show up Madonna?

Madonna may be 56 years old, but she's not slowing down any time soon. Her 13th album Rebel Heart is out later this year and she's performing for the fifth time at the Grammys. But does she still have what it takes to compete with chart-topping teen favourites, like Ariana Grande? Grande has publicly declared her love for Madonna, but she could outshine her idol with her own performance. Tune in to see which pop star has the best performance.

Ariana Grande GETTY IMAGES

Now we'll Sia. Singer turns heads with hits

The Grammys. Showing her face or not, reclusive songwriter Sia earns recognition as pop star

Sia and NYC Gay Men's Chorus backstage during Trailblazers. GETTY IMAGES

Think it's tough to catch a glimpse of Sia's face during her performances these days? Try booking an interview with the reclusive singer.

The performer, who has risen in the pop music ranks thanks to writing hits for female stars and hitting the charts with her own tunes, has dodged press and even turns her head during live performances. The creative campaign for her latest album, 1000 Forms of Fear, was a success thanks to radio airplay and its highly viewed music videos starring Maddie Ziegler of Dance Moms. Sia's album debuted at No. 1 and Chandelier became a multi-platinum international success.

She even earned four Grammy nominations — though she's not sure she'll attend the big show on Sunday.

"I know, it's getting a little close," longtime manager David Russell said in an interview last week (Sia, obviously, wouldn't be interviewed for this story). "It remains to be seen what we'll do."

Sia and Chandelier earned nominations in the top categories, including song and record of the year.

Russell, who has worked with Sia for more than a decade, said they didn't see the commercial success coming.

"We didn't anticipate that kind of reaction, but that fact that that's come has been extraordinary," he said.

Last year marked a breakthrough for 39-year-old Sia, who released her first album in 1997. After writing for a slew of singers, from Rihanna (Diamonds) to Beyoncé (Pretty Hurts), she finally saw her own Top 40 success with Chandelier, a song she originally thought she might send to Rihanna. The writing success came around the time Sia co-starred on David Guetta's Titanium, a song the mega-producer had to convince her to do.

Russell says Alicia Keys was originally considered for Titanium, and even Mary J. Blige cut the track.

"It simply came down to David begging that Sia stay on the record, and wisely she agreed," Russell said. "I mean, it literally happened like two days after she was like, 'That's it. I'm done making my own records. I'm just going to be a behind-the-scenes writer now.'"

Russell says at the time, Sia was becoming famous and it began to make her "feel really uncomfortable" and "really unhappy, so she wanted to put the brakes on that."

But Titanium became a seminal moment for Sia, which was followed by another Top 10 hit, Flo Rida's Wild Ones, which she also sang on and co-wrote.

Sia also has written for Katy Perry, Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera and Kylie Minogue.

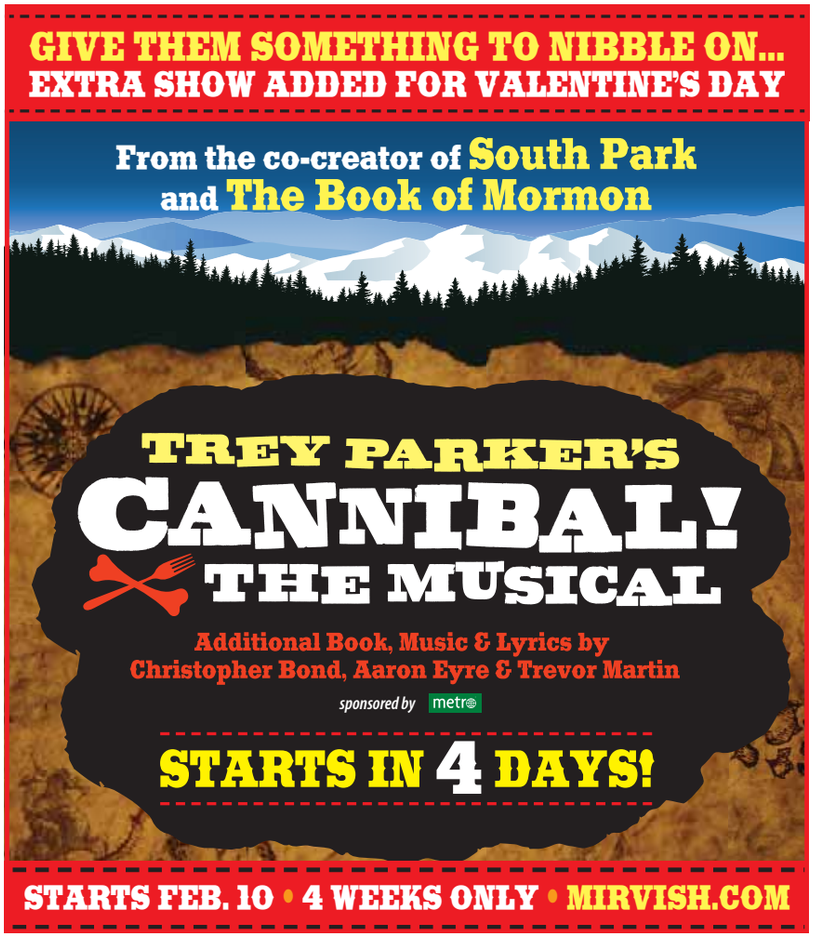
Sia's other Grammy nominations include best pop solo performance and music video for Chandelier.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Battling addiction

Manager David Russell said people should pay attention to his client, "a woman who is 39 years old and isn't trading on sex or accessibility."

- He also adds that Sia's grown over the years, especially watching her get sober.
- "Getting to a place of recognizing you have an addiction issue and then taking the strides, the major strides it takes to combat that issue, I can't think of anything more important that she's achieved than finding that spiritual centre and finding sobriety," he said.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Gossip

NED EHRBAR

METRO'S TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Johnny Depp and Amber Heard. JGETTY IMAGES

You Heard it here: Amber and Johnny already hitched

If you were still shopping for a present for Johnny Depp and Amber Heard ahead of their rumoured wedding this weekend, you're too late.

The happy couple — who announced their engagement in December 2012 — reportedly tied the knot at their home in Los Angeles on Tuesday, People magazine reports.

Depp and Heard are still expected to hold their intimate-yet-lavish wedding on his private island in the Bahamas this weekend for 50 or so of their closest friends, but they went ahead and got the legal part out of the way already. "He's completely in love and can't wait," a source tells E! News. Clearly.

Aniston and Theroux hung up on the prenup?

Justin Theroux and Jennifer Aniston

Now solidly in their third year of being engaged, Jennifer Aniston and Justin Theroux are still apparently having trouble working out the finer details of their prenuptial agreement, according to Us Weekly — or at least one detail of it.

The sticking point? Whether Theroux should be entitled to any of Aniston's earnings from Netflix for the recent Friends deal. "The prenup is pretty much done," a source says. "Jen won't see money from Netflix for about a year, so there has been back and forth about whether her earnings will be considered from during or before their marriage."

Reunited cast of Bell have a blast at Bayside with Fallon

For his run of shows out of Los Angeles, Jimmy Fallon has promised a lot of special treats on The Tonight Show, and last night he certainly delivered.

Fallon pulled off a near-complete Saved by the Bell reunion with a skit chronicling his last day as a student at the fabled '90s high school before running off to New York to become a comedian.

For the bit, Fallon roped in Mark-Paul Gosselaar, Elizabeth Berkley, Mario Lopez, Dennis Haskins (that's Mr. Belding to you) and — most impressively — Tiffani Thiessen and got them into pretty perfect approximations of their old wardrobes — giant mobile phone and all.

Fallon had tried for several years during his Late Night run to get the various cast members together for a reunion, but Thiessen always proved elusive, even prompting her to make a Funny or Die video explaining why she was too busy. But I guess her schedule freed up.

But where were Lark Voohries and recently arrested Dustin Diamond? No one seemed to mention their absence. Funny that.

Jimmy Fallon

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Ricardo is a Canadian chef, television host and author on a mission: To unite people through the pleasure of food. Discover his delicious and simple recipes every Friday — just in time for the weekend

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This recipe serves four. COURTESY RICARDOCUISINE.COM

Dinner. Endive, Peach and Sausage Pizza combines unlikely textures and flavours

RICARDO COOKS
Chef Ricardo
Ricardo Magazine

Calling all culinary weekend warriors: Making your own pizza dough is a lot easier than it sounds, and the tasty results are 100 per cent worth the effort.

Pizza Dough

1. In bowl, combine water, oil and sugar. Set aside.

2. In bowl with wooden spoon, combine flour, yeast and salt. Add water mix and combine into soft ball. Knead dough 3 minutes on floured surface.

3. Place dough in clean and lightly oiled bowl. Cover bowl with a damp cloth and let rise in a warm and humid place for about 1 hour or until the dough doubles in size.

Pizza Toppings

1. With rack in lowest position, place pizza stone or an upside-down baking sheet in the oven. Preheat the oven to 450 F (230 C).

2. In bowl, combine endives, onion, sausage and oil. Season with salt and pepper.

3. Cut dough into four pieces. On floured work surface, roll out four 10-inch (25 cm) round crusts. Sprinkle a little cornmeal on hot stone or baking sheet. Use sheet of parchment paper that will allow you to easily slide the dough in the oven.

4. Spread quarter of endive mixture on each crust and sprinkle with quarter of cheese. Bake on hot stone or baking sheet for 10 minutes or until golden brown. Repeat with the remaining crusts.

5. Garnish pizza with peach slices. **FOLLOW RICARDO ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND ON RICARDOCUISINE.COM OR SUBSCRIBE TO HIS MAGAZINE'S ENGLISH EDITION, WHICH LAUNCHED IN 2014.**

Ingredients

Pizza Dough
- 1 cup (250 ml) warm water
- 3 tbsp (45 ml) olive oil
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 2 3/4 cups (385 g) unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 tsp instant dry yeast (quick-rising)
- 1/2 tsp salt

Pizza Toppings
- 4 medium-sized endives, cored and thinly sliced
- 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
- 3/4 cup (150 g) Rosette de Lyon sausage, cut into 1/4-inch (1/2 cm) dice
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) olive oil
- 2 cups (200 g) grated Gruyère cheese
- 2 ripe but firm peaches, sliced
- Salt and pepper

Liquid Assets

Think outside the pizza box

LIQUID ASSETS
Peter Rockwell
@therealwineguy
liquidassets@eastlink.ca

I love pizza.

In my neighbourhood alone, I can order everything from a traditional artisan pie that tastes like I'm in Naples, to a mass-market version the size of a pool table.

The infinite variety of toppings to choose from makes pizza one of the most versatile wine-pairing opportunities.

While I gravitate towards a meatier pie and a glass of red Italian Chianti, this week's recipe from Chef Ricardo really thinks outside the pizza box.

It's not the combination of sausage and endive that's a unique concept. It's the addition of peaches that really makes for an interesting slice.

Both endive and peaches prefer a white wine with a touch of sweetness, and the Viognier and Chenin Blanc grapes provide enough sugary goodness while still finishing fairly dry.

Boekenhoutskloof's 2013 The Wolftrap White ($12.95 - $15.99) from South Africa combines both (along with a shot of Grenache Blanc) to create a refreshing, pizza perfect white with soft floral aromas and tropical fruit flavours. **PRICES REFLECT THE RANGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY. SOME PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL PROVINCES.**

India meets Italy in pizza

1. In a large skillet, brown the chicken in the oil and butter. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside on a plate.

2. In the same skillet, soften the peppers, onions and garlic for about 5 minutes. Add butter, if needed. Season with salt and pepper. Add the tomatoes and spices and cook for 2 minutes. Remove the skillet from the heat. Return the chicken to the skillet. Add the hummus and yogurt and stir to combine. Adjust the seasoning.

3. With the rack in the middle position, preheat the oven's broiler.

4. Place the naan bread on two baking sheets. Place the chicken mixture on the bread and sprinkle with the cheese.

5. Bake for about 5 minutes or until the cheese is golden brown. **RICARDO**

Ingredients
- 2 skinless and boneless chicken breast halves, cut into strips
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) oil
- 1 tbsp (14 g) butter
- Salt and pepper
- 2 red bell peppers, seeded and cut into strips
- 2 onions, thinly sliced
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 2 plum tomatoes, seeded and diced
- 2 tsp curry powder
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) hummus
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) 10% plain yogurt
- 4 store-bought Naan breads
- 2 cups (200 g) grated mozzarella

This recipe makes four servings. COURTESY RICARDOCUISINE.COM

New Toronto FC midfielder Sebastian Giovinco signs autographs upon his arrival at Pearson International Airport on Thursday. CARLOS OSORIO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Little Italy: Giovinco draws bloody big buzz

MLS. Fans say five-foot-four midfielder's airport welcome is far more impressive than Defoe's was a year ago

The Atomic Ant landed in chilly Toronto to a warm reception on Thursday.

Sebastian Giovinco, Toronto FC's new midfielder, was all smiles after stepping off a plane at Pearson International Airport.

The former Juventus midfielder, known to his fans as the Atomic Ant, emerged from security holding a Toronto FC scarf high above his head. He was greeted by about 200 fans waving five-foot TFC flags and screaming his name.

In Italian, he told them he was happy and excited to be there while vowing to help improve the team after their seventh-place finish last season.

Pointing to fans who eagerly held out jerseys and posed for selfies with the five-foot-four star, Giovinco added he has never been to Toronto but already loves the vibe.

Julia De Faveri, a 13-year-old from Woodbridge wearing a Giovinco Juventus jersey and a TFC scarf, predicted he would make waves in Major League Soccer with his fancy footwork.

She admitted to skipping school to see the star.

"I told the teacher I was going to the doctor because this was a once-in-a-million chance to see him," she said giggling as she stood at the front of a barricade. "I've loved Sebastian for years and he's taking a risk coming here at 28 and setting a trend."

Giovinco's move to Toronto comes a year after English striker Jermain Defoe arrived in the city, attracting crowds that hoped his signing would spark a winning era for the beleaguered club. Those hopes were dashed last month when Defoe — first teased as a "Bloody Big Deal" by the team — was sent to Sunderland in exchange for U.S. striker Jozy Altidore.

The Reds also inked deals this off-season with French midfielder Benoit Cheyrou, Seattle Sounders FC defender Eriq Zavaleta and Polish international player Damien Perquis.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quoted

"There wasn't this hype and nowhere near this crowd."

Shannon Wilson, an 18-year-old student and TFC season ticketholder from Etobicoke on Sebastian Giovinco's arrival drawing a bigger turn out than Jermain Defoe

Alpine skiing

Ottawa's Cook wins surprise silver

Dustin Cook put Canada back on the podium at the world alpine ski championship with a silver medal in Thursday's super-G.

The 25-year-old from Ottawa put down a fast run with a late start number to finish second behind Austrian Hannes Reichelt in Beaver Creek, Colo.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Golf

Tiger lasts only 11 holes in San Diego

In an ominous start to his season, Tiger Woods walked off the course after 11 holes Thursday at the Farmers Insurance Open because of tightness in his lower back he attributed to a fog delay.

It was the third straight PGA Tour event in which he missed the cut or withdrew, and the sixth time since 2010 that he withdrew because of injury.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB

"As strong as we are and as good as we feel about this team, there's some questions that need to be answered in spring training."

Blue Jays manager John Gibbons before Thursday night's annual state of the franchise gathering. The bullpen, second base and pitcher Aaron Sanchez's role remain question marks for the Toronto Blue Jays heading into spring training.

NBA. DeRozan $15K poorer after flagrant foul

DeMar DeRozan's hard foul on Bojan Bogdanovic has proved costly.

The Toronto Raptors guard was fined $15,000 US on Thursday, a day after he threw his body into Bogdanovic, sending the big Nets forward sprawling.

DeRozan was assessed a Flagrant 2 foul and ejected with 1:02 to play in the Raptors' 109-93 loss to the Nets.

Wednesday's loss was the Raptors' first of the season against an Atlantic Division opponent. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

DeMar DeRozan fouls Bojan Bogdanovic on Wednesday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

All-star game

Lowry signs up for skills challenge

Raptors guard Kyle Lowry will participate in the 2015 skills challenge as part of the NBA's all-star weekend, the league announced Thursday.

The skills challenge takes place Sat. Feb. 14 at Barclays Center in Brooklyn.

The challenge calls for two players to compete simultaneously on an identical course with the fastest finisher reaching the next round. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

NHL. Phaneuf will miss 5th straight game Friday

Since a hand injury forced Dion Phaneuf out of the lineup, the Maple Leafs' winless streak has snowballed to 10 in a row.

They'll try again to end that skid Friday at the New Jersey Devils without their captain, who will miss his fifth straight game with a hand injury.

"It's extremely disappointing to not be able to contribute," Phaneuf said after practice Thursday. "I want to be there to try and help our team pull out of it." **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

Dion Phaneuf won't be back Friday night against the Devils. GETTY IMAGES

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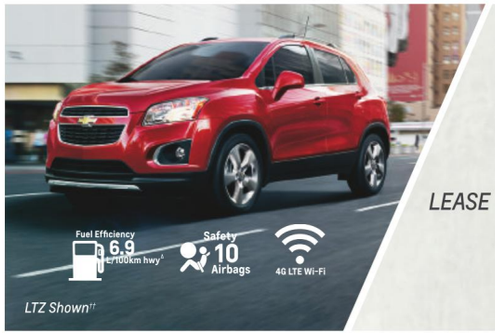

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Local man has firm grasp on bobblehead game

Mark Wlodarski of Mississauga has a growing collection of 400 bobbleheads. DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Memorabilia. Collection includes figurines that make their homes in 10 glass cabinets of spare room

When Mark Wlodarski, 31, lines up outside the Air Canada Centre for the Raptors-Clippers game Friday night, he'll have something more than Kyle Lowry's jump shot to look forward to.

As Wlodarski and the first 5,000 fans make their ways through the doors for the game, they'll be handed limited edition Jerome Williams bobbleheads — the first of four figurines to be doled out by the team this season and a welcome addition to Wlodarski's growing collection of more than 400 bobbleheads.

The "JYD" figurine will be right at home in one of 10 glass cabinets in the spare bedroom of Wlodarski's condo.

Surrounding him will be likenesses of teammates past and present, including 11 Vince Carter figurines dating back to the team's purple jersey days, six Raptors mascot bobbleheads and even one of longtime play-by-play announcer Chuck Swirsky.

Sitting adjacent to the Raptors clan — complete with a handful of Jose Calderons, DeMar DeRozans and Chris Boshes — are dozens of Toronto Blue Jays and Maple Leafs bobbleheads. KISS band members, a Playboy bunny, the TV cast of American Choppers and even six editions of former mayor Rob Ford make appearances.

Quoted

"It's been fun putting the collection together because you can never complete it. There will always be more popping up."

Mark Wlodarski on his stockpile of bobbleheads

The collection is the product of hours spent scrolling through retail websites, says Wlodarski, a University of Toronto administrator with season's tickets for the Raptors, Argos and Rock.

"A couple times a day I look through the ads on eBay or Kijiji really quick for anything that fits into my collection," says the Mississauga man. "Plus, it's nice having a handful of people that know me well enough to reach out to me and ask if I have seen an ad or want to buy something."

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Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

1			7					9
				5	4			
		7				8		
	5			6				7
	3						5	
6				9			2	
		1				3		
			4	3				
5					2			6

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Yesterday's Sudoku

1	6	5	2	7	8	9	3	4
3	8	7	4	6	9	2	1	5
9	2	4	1	3	5	6	8	7
7	3	2	5	8	4	1	6	9
5	9	1	3	2	6	7	4	8
8	4	6	7	9	1	5	2	3
4	1	3	6	5	7	8	9	2
2	5	9	8	1	3	4	7	6
6	7	8	9	4	2	3	5	1

See for yourself.

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Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Don't worry about how much something of a creative nature is going to cost you. If your plan is a good one – and it is – then the cosmic powers that be will help you. Take that risk.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
It might not be a good idea to speak from the heart over the next 24 hours, not with some of the negative opinions you have about certain people. A day or two from now your attitude will be a lot more positive.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Your confidence may take a dive today but it's no big deal. As a Gemini you are rarely down for long and come the weekend you will be full of life and laughter again.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Under no circumstances commit yourself to anything of a business or financial nature today. If others try to pressure you into signing on the dotted line that is a sure sign you should wait. There's no rush.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Be careful how you talk to and deal with loved ones and family members today. You may not mean to give offence but something you say or do could be taken the wrong way and cause all sorts of problems.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You may not be able to get into the swing of things socially today but that's OK. Send time with your thoughts and once you have made sense of them you will be the life of the party.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Your principles may cost you money today but you are not the sort to abandon your standards for financial reward. You are also not the sort to admit you got it wrong once you adopt a certain position!

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Someone in a position of power will put you to the test today and you must raise your game and show them what you can do. There is little doubt you will win in the end.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
If you allow fear to guide your thoughts and actions you will miss out on something that could make your life so much more enjoyable. Why should you be afraid of something just because it's new?

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
If you go to extremes over the next 24 hours you are sure to provoke a strong reaction. Is that wise? Try to find a more socially acceptable outlet for your ambition and aggression.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You may find it hard to get along with people in positions of authority today but if you take them on you are likely to lose. There are times when it is better to back down gracefully and this is one of them.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You may feel run down today but don't worry because things are not as bad as they seem. What little things can you do to make yourself feel comfortable?

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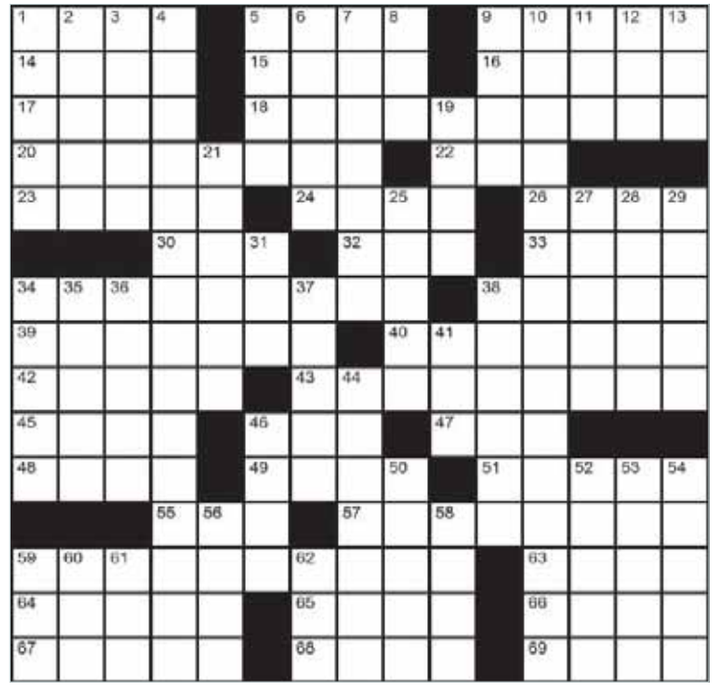
→ See the full instructions on Metro's Voices page.

Yesterday's Crossword

Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



Across

1. "Do the Right Thing" (1989) pizzeria
5. "Break __ __ Me Gently"
9. Home
14. Tom Jones' "__ __ Should Ever Leave You"
15. Tarps-laying reason
16. Cried, kitten-style
17. Biblical land
18. Le Chateau __ (Rustic resort hotel in Quebec)
20. Morden, MB: Marine reptile like 'Bruce' at the Canadian Fossil Discovery Centre, the largest one on display in the world
22. Waste
23. Cache
24. Hawaiian coffee
26. Suggest
30. Tic-Toe link
32. Black Sabbath singer ...his initials-sharers
33. Hodgepodge
34. Way up Whistler
38. Burst with pride
39. Captured again
40. Vancouver attraction, __ Conservatory
42. Tales
43. Eminence
45. Flooding oper.
46. Ms. Larter
47. Liq. measures
48. Exchange [abbr.]
49. Socialite sorts, shortly
51. Arise
55. Peculiar
57. Ancient Roman racers
59. 1909: J.A.D. McCurdy makes history by piloting this aircraft in Canada's first powered flight: 2 wds.
63. Mark Harmon's show
64. Donald Duck nephew
65. "By the Time _ __ to Phoenix"
66. Backsplash square
67. Anxiety
68. Damp
69. Backyard blades

Down

1. Scott __ (MP from Newfoundland)
2. "The game is __." - Sherlock Holmes
3. Tibet's capital
4. Canadian host (who played in the CFL) of HGTV's "Tackle My Reno": 2 wds.
5. "__ la Douce" (1963)
6. Shish __ (Dish popular in Montreal)
7. It was hot with a cat on top: 2 wds.
8. London's prov.
9. Podium
10. Ludwig's 1824 symphony: 2 wds.
11. Hoo-er
12. Benicio Toro link
13. Tokyo, once
19. Times
21. San Jose hockey players
25. We Will __ __ Undersold! (Store's boast)
27. L'__ __ Montreal
28. Frasier's brother
29. Driving costs
31. Toronto-born actor Mr. Bennett
34. Actor Jon
35. Lift with might
36. Fall into _ __ (Get played)
37. Fireplace
38. "Welcome Back, __"
41. Race unit
44. Person's inners shield
46. Mailing info, briefly
50. The Taming of the __
52. __-economic status
53. Handy
54. Spelled-out followers of Rs
56. Bug repellent ingredient
58. Li'l lawyer
59. Extremist org. in 1974 headlines
60. Euripides play
61. Oaf
62. Performed

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